المجلس الاسلامي
Islamic Council

10 September 1991

President François Mitterrand
Palais de l'Elysée
75008 Paris

Excellency,
I write to appeal to you to consider the plight of the ordinary people of Iraq, innocent men, women and children who are suffering terrible hardship and many of whom are facing death from starvation or disease because they have no drinking water, no medicines, not even basic foods. Children, of whom there are some 200,000 under the age of 4, are sadly the most vulnerable and some reports that I have seen state that 6000 have already died from disease or malutrition.

The authorisation on 15 August to Iraq to sell limited oil over the ensuing 6 months will only result in making about $1 billion available for emergency food and medicines. Estimates made by the UN itself say that at least $2.65 billion are needed in the coming 4 months alone just to provide disaster level rations of food, 40% of pre-war levels of drinking water and 50% of electricity. The Secretary General of the UN has recently called for more help for Iraq, as have many aid and humanitarian organisations.

Iraq has now complied with all the conditions set by the UN resolutions passed concerning the Gulf war. It is the common people of Iraq who are suffering, not the government, and the only action that can really help them would be the lifting of sanctions so that the basic necessities of life can begin to reach them again. France as a country which has had close relations with Iraq, and as a permament member of the Security Council, could do much to lead a humanitarian approach to this tragedy and I hope and pray that you will consider taking such action which would earn the gratitude of all who care about humanity.

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

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Secretary General

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